THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) An Expert Group of Eminent Scientists has been constituted to advise on strategies towards goals of *sustainability*.

2513. [*Transferred to the 26th March, 1992*].

World Bank Report on Agriculture

2514. SHRI PRABHAKAR B. KORE:

SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the criticism of Agriculture R and D by World Bank in its confidential report, as reported in the E.T. of 21st October, 1991 and if so full details thereof and corrective steps taken if any;

(b) whether it is correct that ICAR evaluation system has failed to be effective; and

(c) whether a high powered Evaluation Team is proposed to be set up to evaluate the work of ICAR with special reference to its role and success and otherwise of ensuring food Security for the future vis-a-vis continued imports of farm products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Sir, The report which appeared in the Economic Times of October 21, 1991 under the caption "Indian Agriculture: the World Bank View" discussess the entire gamut of Indian agricultural development. It says that research effort has neglected farm management and has primarily been on plant breeding for foodgrains and other crops,

In order to increase productivity per unity area and also to ensure increased inbuilt sustainability, the present thrust of agricultural research is on diversification of cropping system by promoting new crops and also by increased coverage under crops suited for the non-traditional areas. Apart from providing improved varieties of seeds to farmers, the approach is on ecologically sound integrated pest management.

(b) ICAR evaluation system has not been found to be ineffective.

(c) No Sir.

Degradation of land

2515. SHRI PRABHAKAR B. KORE:

SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the land degradation in the country has taken alarming proportions threatening food production as also quality of lives of poor farmers and if so, factors leading to this situation;

(b) what has been the actual area of land so degraded as in 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990;

(c) what corrective steps have been taken/proposed to be taken in the matter during the 8th plan period; and

(d) whether Government have any plans to follow the lead given in this matter by the US National Research Council as brought out in a review on the subject by the noted writer A. T. Dudani in the Pioneer of 25th January, 1992?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE